



# Town of BEACON FALLS *Connecticut*

**CHRISTOPHER J. BIELIK**

*First Selectman*

**Testimony  
Christopher J. Bielik  
First Selectman  
Town of Beacon Falls  
Before the Appropriations Committee  
February 14, 2017**

Thank you for the opportunity to comment regarding **H.B. No. 7027 AN ACT CONCERNING THE STATE BUDGET FOR THE BIENNIUM ENDING JUNE THIRTIETH 2019, AND MAKING APPROPRIATIONS THEREFOR**, as it relates to the state Department of Emergency Services and Public Protection (DESPP).

The Town of Beacon Falls is a small community of approximately 6,000 residents. We have participated in the Resident State Trooper program for many years, and have been reasonably satisfied with the level of service we receive via this program.

One point of concern I have expressed often is that on days when our resident trooper is called away by his barracks for training and other duties which take precedence over his duties in town, we do not receive a one-for-one replacement. Instead, our coverage is taken over by a trooper who is on duty responding to incidents in the Route 8 corridor that extends from Exit 12 to Exit 29. If the trooper is occupied and a call comes in for an incident in my town, it can (and has) taken as much as four hours for a response. Our internal analysis shows we 'lose' our resident trooper anywhere from 30 to 45 days per year.

Under the current system where the town is responsible for 85% of the cost of the program, this lack of coverage can at least be rationalized and tolerated. If the cost were to increase to a full 100% of the program, it becomes impossible to justify. No organization should be expected to bear the full cost of anything when it does not receive a commensurate level of service for the expense incurred.

Further, I am concerned about the use of the word 'constables' which this bill includes, with an additional \$750 per year assessment added to the cost of the program for every 'constable' supervised by the resident trooper.

The Town of Beacon Falls eliminated our 'constable' program approximately 30 years ago. We currently augment our resident trooper with three full time and approximately 10 part time sworn police officers. In addition, we have an Administrative Police Lieutenant who works hand in hand with our resident trooper in overseeing the training and scheduling of our officers. Every Beacon Falls police officer is CT POST certified. If the use of the word 'constable' in the proposed bill is intended to refer to members of a force such as I have described, I can assure you that word would not be considered complimentary to my officers. This 'supervisory' assessment would add an additional cost of \$10,500 per year, on top of the additional 15% increased cost of the program itself (approximately \$30,000), for a total increase of around \$40,000.

I believe the consequences of the proposed changes to the resident trooper program have not been considered fully, and I hope that the thoughts I have expressed in this testimony provide an opportunity for reconsideration of this proposed bill.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Chris Bielik", written over the printed name.

Christopher J. Bielik

First Selectman

Town of Beacon Falls

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